



**CONSTRUCTION**

**REPORT**

**NEWARK HOUSING AUTHORITY • 1956**



*ABOVE: Clearing the site for Columbus Homes, the city's newest low-rent housing project, which now has 1,556 apartments in tall buildings.*

*COVER: Columbus Homes under construction. This low-rent development is in the middle of the Broad Street-Branch Brook Park redevelopment project. (Photograph by Fairchild Aerial Surveys.)*

## FOREWORD

Much has happened since the Housing Authority of the City of Newark published its last general report to the citizens of Newark. The city modernized its government with a new charter drafted by an able commission of citizens and warmly approved by the electorate. Newark's two major insurance companies, Prudential and Mutual Benefit, have decided to expand on their home grounds by erecting new office buildings. New industries have been established; payrolls have climbed steadily. The city administration has been alert to opportunities for strengthening Newark's economy.

The indispensable key to economic progress is enough good housing which in turn strengthens family life. The Housing Authority is proud of its record in postwar construction. Four new projects, larger than any of the earlier ones, have provided comfortable dwellings for 4,374 families. The Authority is now the proprietor of 7,385 apartments, as against 3,008 in 1946. As the redevelopment agency for the City of Newark, the Housing Authority is clearing blighted acreage that will afford choice sites for private developers.

To our Mayor Leo P. Carlin, the City Council and other cooperative city officials, to our sympathetic citizenry, to helpful civic organizations and to understanding newspapers, we extend our hearty thanks for the support that enables us to do our job.

THE REV. THOMAS J. FINNEGAN, *Chairman*  
Housing Authority of the City of Newark

# CONSTRUCTION REPORT

In 1953 the Newark Housing Authority opened its first two postwar housing projects, Otto E. Kretchmer Homes (730 apartments) and Archbishop Thomas J. Walsh Homes (630 apartments).

Last year the Housing Authority finished the biggest housing development in New Jersey, the Reverend William P. Hayes Homes, for 1,458 families.

This year the Authority opened Christopher Columbus Homes, largest of all with 1,556 apartments in 12-story buildings. Just west of the Lackawanna Railroad station, Columbus Homes offers more excitement per square foot than any other low-rent project. The buildings cover only 2.7 acres of the 14½-acre site. Apartments have corner windows for maximum light and air. There are facilities for practically everything: baby carriages, movies, hobbies, a library and a health clinic. The laundrettes have play space for children and storage cabinets for laundry.

## *Long Branch, Move Over!*

Already the men, women and children in the Authority's projects outnumber the population of Long Branch or Rahway. When

Columbus Homes is fully occupied in 1956, Newark's public housing population will exceed the population of Hackensack. The grand total of 7,385 apartments will be an increase of 145 percent over the 3,008 total at the end of World War II.

The four postwar projects are markedly different from the eight earlier ones. Buildings now rise to eight or more stories instead of the former three. High land costs made it necessary to go up. Individual rooms are about 8 percent larger and the average apartment has 4.75 rooms as against 4.5 in the prewar developments. Larger apartments are needed. The Authority's waiting list includes some 250 families with eight or more children.

Outdoor clothes lines are missing. The

new projects have full cellars with automatic washers and dryers.

Columbus Homes, bounded by Sheffield Street, Seventh and Summer Avenues, High and Nassau Streets, lies between Newark's first two redevelopment projects. The seven blocks west of Columbus Homes will be cleared by the Housing Authority and turned over to private developers for rebuilding, and so will the six blocks extending east to Broad Street.

## *1,200 Private Apartments*

Both tracts will be rebuilt under the supervision of the Housing Authority, which is the city's redevelopment agency. The Authority's plan for the Branch Brook Park project west of Columbus Homes calls for 560 privately built and privately operated apartments with off-street parking, a small shopping area, expanded church facilities, an enlarged municipal swimming pool and a new school. The Broad Street project will have 640 private apartments, a commercial area and parking space.

Building 4,374 additional low-rent apartments for low-income families has been the biggest construction job in Newark's history.

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*Archbishop Thomas J. Walsh Homes on the Passaic River.*

The hardest part of the job was the peaceable removal of families and small businesses from the dilapidated buildings on the four sites. Long-term planning was required. The Authority purposefully built its first two postwar projects, Kretchmer and Walsh Homes, on sites that were largely vacant. This created a housing reserve which was used later to rehouse families from the thickly built Hayes and Columbus sites.

The Hayes site (bounded by Hunterdon Street, Seventeenth Avenue, West Kinney Street, Belmont Avenue and a block on Springfield Avenue) was host to 762 families, 98 lodgers and 120 stores and other businesses. The Columbus site had 479 families and 125 commercial establishments. This is how Hayes was cleared:

Drawing on past experience, the Authority first made a schedule for the progress of demolition. A relocation office was opened at the site in May 1951 to help tenants and owners find suitable shelter elsewhere. During the 18-month relocation effort, priority in public housing vacancies was given to eligible families, of whom 202—or 27 percent of the site residents—became Housing Authority tenants. The Authority helped 363 other families (47 percent) find private housing and 197 families (26 percent) moved without assistance.

*Columbus Homes, newest project. ➡*



The search for private housing was difficult because of scarcity and high rents. It was not unusual to find three rooms with no private kitchen or bath priced at \$25 a week, \$108 a month. Furnished single rooms were generally \$12 to \$15 a week or \$52 to \$65 a month, an impossible figure for elderly widows or widowers on public assistance with a maximum rent allowance of \$35.

### *The Search for Shelter*

The relocation staff tapped every possible source of vacant shelter. Daily telephone calls were made to realtors. Newspaper ads were minutely scanned. Other leads were obtained from social, church, labor and business groups.

Court action was reluctantly instituted against 153 of the 762 families but in only five cases were eviction warrants executed. All five were for non-payment of several months' rent after the Authority had taken title. No family, however, was turned into the street. The relocation staff always managed to find shelter.

One heartbreaking aspect is the fate of many small tenant storekeepers. There is no law that permits the Housing Authority to pay these tradesmen anything for damage to their business. Yet the damage is often irreparable. Moving them from the spot where they have sold groceries or repaired shoes for many years, and scattering



*High land costs do not permit more 2-story projects like Stephen Crane, built in 1941.*

their old customers, may spell ruin. Some of the older men simply quit. Others look for jobs in stores outside the project area.

The relocation staff is now moving families and businesses from the sites of the Branch Brook Park and Broad Street pri-

ivate redevelopment projects. The Branch Brook area has 720 families and 131 commercial firms and the Broad Street tract sustains 409 families and 118 business places—a grand total of 1,378 families and commercial establishments to be moved.

# THE NEXT BIG JOB

A second huge redevelopment project was authorized in April 1955 by Mayor Leo P. Carlin and the City Council. Federal approval is now awaited.

The Housing Authority plans to clear 15 blocks in the blighted Central Ward (the old Third Ward). New private apartments and stores would be built on 11 blocks and the remaining four would be the site of 1,206 low-rent apartments to be built and operated by the Authority.

The entire project would cost \$31,000,000. The new low-rent project would require \$15,000,000.

As in all approved redevelopment projects, the federal government would contribute two-thirds of the net cost after sale of the cleared land to private developers. The City of Newark would meet one-third of the deficit. But much of the city's share would be accounted for by the construction of two new elementary schools for the redeveloped area and its vicinity.

The 15 blocks will be chosen in the congested area east of Belmont Avenue. This district was officially declared obsolete in the city's master plan of 1947, which listed

275 blocks in the central city and 75 in the Ironbound as hopelessly blighted. All 350 blocks should ultimately be cleared and rebuilt.

The old Third Ward is the place where successive waves of immigrants settled for almost 100 years. Many of the dwellings were hurriedly built to take care of the next

boatload. The 1950 census showed more than 70 percent of the structures were more than 50 years old.

Rebuilding 15 blocks will be only a small start toward redeeming this valuable district close to the heart of the city. But the new project will demonstrate again that blight can be stopped by drastic surgery.





# FIGHTING BLIGHT

How can Newark curb blight, eliminate slums, rehouse low-income families, provide middle-income families with houses they can afford, and offer new sites to commerce and industry?

The importance of doing these things is underlined by several facts:

Studies for the master plan showed that 1,209 acres, or about 1/12th of the entire city, should be razed and rebuilt. This area contained 28,260 dwellings, or 22 percent of the city's total.

Newark's slums roughly encircle the downtown business district. They are a ring of trouble: poverty, dirt, sickness, delinquency and crime.

Although the number of slum dwellings has been reduced almost 15 percent (from 28,000 to 24,000) since the Housing Authority began clearing land and building projects, slums still outnumber modern low-rent housing by a ratio of 3 to 1.

Sites for sorely needed private housing are almost non-existent. From January 1945 through August 1955, only 4,739 private



dwelling were started, as compared with 4,374 public housing starts.

Newark is confronted by the same kind of crisis that large corporations face when technological progress makes their business obsolete. Street railway companies saved themselves by going into bus operation. Coal dealers became oil dealers, radio manufacturers turned out television sets. Newark must likewise seek regeneration but the techniques for a city are vastly more complex than those required for a switch from trolleys to buses.

## *Urban Redevelopment*

The best available tool so far is urban redevelopment, which is being used for the two projects adjoining the Lackawanna tracks (described on page 1).

Urban redevelopment means condemning blighted acreage, clearing it, and replanning it for the private or public uses for which it is best suited. These are the things that the Housing Authority has been doing since its functions were enlarged from the original program of building and operating low-rent housing. Private developers are now being offered the cleared sites adjoining Broad Street and Branch Brook Park for construction of apartment houses, shopping centers and other commercial ventures.

The land will be sold at reduced prices since there would be no takers if the Housing

Authority charged the full cost of acquiring the sites and clearing them. The loss in this writedown is covered two-thirds by the federal government, one-third by the city. In figuring the city's share, credit is given for the full value of new schools, new streets or other improvements.

Urban redevelopment under the federal Housing Act of 1949 is a multi-purpose tonic. Here's why:

1. The former tax yield of \$176,000 a year from the 46 blighted acres along the Lackawanna tracks will be more than doubled—and at the same time the city will save on street maintenance and other services. The extra taxes will repay the city's investment within a few years.

2. Private developers and merchants will have new and profitable opportunities.

3. Middle-income families will have modern apartments, often within walking distance of jobs.

4. The spread of blight in one area will be stopped.

## *More Low-Rent Housing*

Slums and blighted areas cannot be razed unless new housing is provided for the families in them—and very few of these families can afford standard private housing. That is why urban redevelopment makes it necessary to build more public housing.

The Housing Authority has thousands of

applications from families that qualify under the income limits for low-rent housing. And, despite the Authority's policy of discouraging applications from over-income families, 7,000 families with incomes of \$3,500 to \$6,000 have submitted applications within the past two years.

## *Middle-Income Housing*

New or recently built dwellings within the price range of middle-income families do not exist in Newark. That is why 7,000 families have vainly appealed to the Housing Authority. Most of them can pay \$20 to \$25 a room. Most are living in substandard or wornout dwellings, or are doubled up with in-laws. They have no place to go.

The housing needs of middle-income families could be met by imagination, enterprise and new legislation. One practical formula would be:

1. Land at the writedown price made possible by the redevelopment law.

2. An interest rate of, say, 2¾ percent, with the loan guaranteed by the federal or state government (the state of Connecticut has lent funds directly at 1½ percent to families who could not otherwise afford to build).

3. An amortization period of 50 to 60 years to reduce monthly payments.

4. Development and management by true cooperatives.

## Conservation

Many dwellings that are sinking into the slum psychosis can be saved by therapy. In 1953 the city government created the Committee on Neighborhood Conservation and Rehabilitation with Miss Agnes Coleman, then president of the Real Estate Board, as chairman. After a careful study of municipal codes, the committee recommended that a separate Housing Court be established for all code enforcement cases. This court was set up in 1954 and quickly proved its value by expediting hearings and punishing multiple offenders. When Newark changed its form of government in 1954, the committee was reestablished by Mayor Carlin.

A couple of things should be understood about conservation and rehabilitation. First, you can't conserve a slum. The only way to treat a slum is to demolish it. Second, when borderline buildings are rehabilitated, rent goes up. The owner who spends a thousand or several thousand is entitled to a return on his investment. But when the rent rises the tenant may not be able to rise to the

**GONE FOREVER:** Two views of the once notorious Aqueduct Alley, which was wiped out in 1955 by the Housing Authority. Private apartments will be built here as part of the Branch Brook Park redevelopment project.





demand. Result: Still less housing for the families in greatest need.

## *Urban Renewal*

The conservation method was written into the federal Housing Act of 1954 under the name of urban renewal. This new law is being used by the city administration and the Housing Authority to salvage and rebuild the Central Ward, a blighted area of about 100 blocks.

Part of the land will be completely cleared for urban redevelopment. There will be new sites for private housing, for commercial and industrial building, for schools and playgrounds and for low-rent public housing. Other parts of the Central Ward will get a face-lifting and body-building treatment to reverse the trend toward slum status. Health and sanitary codes will be rigidly enforced to bring dubious dwellings up to par. Really good structures will be left alone.

The Authority will assist owners seeking a preferred type of FHA insurance on mortgages for repairs of seedy properties.

Urban renewal is intended to provide flexibility. It used to be necessary to raise a small minority of good houses along with the vast majority of bad. The new program will permit demolition of the incorrigibles and preservation of those worth keeping.



*Modern plants are multiplying in Newark. Why Wilbur B. Driver built here is told on page 12.*

## ECONOMIC HEAL

Although Newark's housing supply is far from adequate, the city's economic health is better than ever. For instance

Payrolls handled through Newark's time banks increased from \$302,000,000 in 1940 to \$884,000,000 in 1954—a rise much greater than the cost of living increase.

Bank debits, which show the turnover of funds in business, increased from \$4,186,000,000 in 1940 to \$12,817,000,000 in 1954.

The federal census showed that the num-

ber of manufacturing establishments increased from 1,451 in 1939 to 1,874 in 1948, when the most recent count was made. Scores of new businesses have been started since.

The downtown business district, which has seen no major changes since the National Newark Building was completed

in 1931, has heard riveting guns again. The \$5,000,000 Commerce Court Building was completed in 1953. New stores have been built on the old Post Office site (empty since 1937), and the old Center Market has been converted into an air conditioned office building.

The most heartening news of 1954 was



*Reminiscent of bygone years are these industrial buildings on Park Street.*

## TH AND HOUSING

the Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company's decision to abandon the idea of moving to the suburbs. Instead, the company is erecting a 20-story building at 320 Broad Street, to be occupied in 1957.

In November 1955 the Prudential Insurance Company made headlines with a decision to demolish its old buildings, beginning

next August, and erect a 24-story central tower with 7-story wings and an additional 7-story building across Bank Street. The first buildings in the \$20,000,000 project are scheduled for completion early in 1959.

Industry is spending money on Newark plants. Although the grimy structures of past generations are still plentiful, mod-

ern factories are dotting the industrial landscape.

Newark's new city government is cooperating with business leaders to make the city increasingly attractive to industry. Early in

1955 Mayor Carlin appointed the Newark Economic Development Committee, an advisory body of 18 members drawn from industry, labor, commerce and finance. The chairman is H. Bruce Palmer, president of Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company, and the vice chairman is Frederick H. Groel.

vice president and secretary of Prudential Insurance Company.

Subcommittees have vigorously tackled a variety of civic problems. The parking committee's recommendation that a parking authority be created to build off-street facilities has already been adopted. The industrial sites committee is listing meadow acreage that could be reclaimed as well as slum sites that should be redeveloped for industrial use. The highways and freeways committee is working on a coordinated freeway plan for the city. The promotion committee is seeking new businesses through better public relations. A more attractive gateway to Newark is the goal of the Penn Plaza committee, whose members are concerned with the dilapidated structures that lie between Penn Station and Broad Street. Another committee is working on credit facilities for new enterprises that need cash.

Members of the Economic Development Committee have visited Pittsburgh to study the dramatic changes wrought in the Golden Triangle.

Whenever a chance to help a Newark industry comes along the Housing Authority jumps for it. The case of the Wilbur B. Driver Company is an example. In 1950 this baby-steel mill faced a problem. After 23 years in Newark it had 500 employees and a growing business. Doubling the floor space was essential. The company owned

land to the north of its plant at 1875 McCarter Highway but this plot was 30 feet above the highway level. The new building had to be on the same level as the old one yet if the company's site were excavated, the Authority's high ground would drain into it. President Robert O. Driver finally decided to move from Newark.

Word of the company's plight reached the Housing Authority, which sent a representative to call on Mr. Driver.

"Would it solve your problem if we lowered our housing site 30 feet?"

"It certainly would," said Mr. Driver.

"The New Jersey Turnpike contractors are doing fill. We can bring our site down without increasing costs."

That was done. The Driver Company then put up a new building and hired 150 more workers. A payroll of more than \$2,500,000 was saved for Newark.

"The Housing Authority has been tremendously cooperative," Mr. Driver says. "We couldn't have asked for anything more."

## *Absentee Dollars*

The 1951 census revealed that Essex County has the nation's third highest buying income per family. The Essex average was \$7,718, topped only by \$9,402 in Westchester County and \$1,791 in Nassau County, both New York. Newark's depart-

ment stores handled about one-half of all department store business in New Jersey.

Considerably more would be spent in Newark stores if middle-income families could find suitable houses within the city. This point is brought out by the experience of Fisher Silversmiths, which bought a plant in Newark in 1953 after renting space in Jersey City for 20 years. The average wage is about \$70 a week. So far as the company knows, none of the 90 employees has moved to Newark although a house nearer to the plant would save time and money. Because Newark doesn't offer good houses to the \$70-a-week worker, the \$300,000 Fisher payroll is spent in other communities.

Harold Widman, personnel director of Weston Electrical Instrument Company, reports that one problem in recruiting critically needed employees from other cities is that Newark has no desirable housing for middle-income families. "The new owner must take something inferior or go out to the suburbs," Mr. Widman says.

Newark cannot maintain its economic health if middle-income families are turned away and the proportion of low income families keeps rising. The ultimate result would be higher and higher taxes on business and the remaining higher income families. The higher the tax rate, the more reason for business firms and upper income families to leave the city.

## *Exodus from Newark*

*Because the city has almost no vacant land for building, thousands among its daytime population go to suburban homes. Newark provides services while the suburbs get the taxes. The Housing Authority's redevelopment program will produce private apartments for middle-income families.*



# CHANGING PATTERNS

Housing in Newark is scarcer than it used to be. Consider these figures from the last two census years:

	1940	1950	Increase
Dwellings	116,757	124,398	6.5%
Households	112,515	122,440	8.8%

People have been multiplying faster than houses. In 1950, 10,685 married couples had no house of their own. Most of them were doubled up with in-laws or friends.

Many Newarkers remember when the ring of carpenters' hammers was a familiar sound. In the boom year of 1927 private builders put up 5,144 dwellings in Newark.

But in the 20 years from 1934 through 1953 only 5,524 private dwellings were erected, an average of 276 a year.

Real estate developers haven't lost the desire to make an honest dollar. But there are so few vacant sites in Newark that most building is done in the suburbs. From 1946



*To buy a \$20,000 house like these in Forest Hill, you should have a \$14,000 income*

through 1953 the yearly average of new one-family houses in Newark was only 34.

Few young couples could dream of buying these houses, priced at about \$20,000. Who could afford them? Assume a 20-year mortgage of \$16,000. Interest, amortization and taxes take \$162 a month before the owner has paid a nickel for fuel, gas, electricity, water, insurance, maintenance and repairs. He can swing it if he makes \$14,000 a year or more but if he earns less he is asking for trouble. That is why house hunters look in the suburbs.

The big houses built a generation ago are more costly than smaller structures of recent years. Parents whose children have grown up and moved away find that two persons cannot afford the luxury — and the labor — of a big house. They look for an apartment or join the migration to the suburbs.

The purchaser of the old house often makes it pay by splitting it up into two or more apartments or by renting furnished rooms to low-income tenants (but not for low rents). When the owner milks every

possible dollar from the property and spends only pennies for maintenance, the house is doomed. It will steadily sink into the status of slum dwelling.

While higher income families have been moving out of the city, lower income families have been moving in. Between 1940 and 1950 the population of Newark increased only 2 percent but in some of the already crowded low-income areas the increase was 67 percent.

The newcomers are a valuable resource. They staff the factories and stores. They spend their pay checks in Newark. But until they climb further up the economic ladder they can't contribute much to the municipal treasury. The whole municipal plant, however, must be kept up—schools, streets, health services, police and fire protection and other services.

That is one reason why Newark's tax rate kept rising until this year—why the burden on industry, commerce and the remaining upper income families is more than it used to be. But in all fairness it should be recognized that inflation has been the primary cause of higher taxes. The New Jersey consumer's price index in February 1954 was 201 percent of the June 1939 level. The Newark tax rate of \$8.55 in 1954 was only 188 percent of the \$4.50 rate in 1939. Newark taxpayers are luckier than most of them think.

## EVER HEAR THIS ONE?

You have probably heard somebody say "Of course the slums are disgraceful, but the taxpayers can't afford to pay rent for all these people in public housing."

The interesting truth is that the people in public housing pay most of the cost of building, financing and operating low-rent projects. Each family pays roughly one fifth of its income, regardless of the apartment size. The average rent paid in Newark's low-rent projects last year was \$41.73, which included gas, electricity, heat and water. The average family income was \$2,503 a year, \$48.15 a week.

Because low-income families cannot meet the full cost of standard housing, the federal government chips in with a subsidy. The average monthly subsidy for each apartment last year was \$28.96. How much does the federal subsidy for low-rent housing projects all over the country cost the Newark taxpayer? Well, a man with a wife and two children and a \$4,000 income pays an income tax of \$240. Exactly 15 cents of the family income is used for the subsidy.

But how about Newark? Aren't taxes in Newark higher because of tax-exempt public housing? No—they are actually lower.

Of course public housing is tax-exempt, like schools, libraries and other public institutions. Unlike other tax-exempt agencies, the Housing Authority makes annual payments to the city. These are called payments in lieu of taxes. They are 10 percent of the rent collections (exclusive of utility costs).

The payment in 1954 was \$282,111.

*Slums cost the average Newark family \$70 a year.*





Housing Authority is one of the 10 biggest taxpayers in Newark.

The Authority is paying the city almost double the taxes levied on its sites when they were occupied by private white slums. The city does not contribute one cent in cash subsidy to the Authority.

What really robs the Newark taxpayer is the hidden subsidy to the slums. The slums always demand more health service, welfare assistance, police supervision, fire fighting service and other city services than good neighborhoods require. Taxes from the slums pay for only a fraction of these extraordinary services.

More than 10 years ago the Housing Authority calculated that the average rent on each substandard dwelling was \$230 a year—the spread between the cost of municipal services and the value from taxes.

In terms of today's inflated dollar the rent for each slum dwelling would be at least \$350 a year. That means a total annual subsidy of \$8,400,000 for the 24,000 substandard dwellings. The average family in Newark is paying \$70 a year to subsidize slums as against 15¢ for public housing. How many families can afford \$70 a year?



Two tenants of Hayes Homes: Sharon Lasenberry and friend.

# THE END

It's fine to see modern buildings with trees and grass standing where little but garbage had blossomed before. But this obvious improvement is merely incidental to the end purpose: giving families a place where they can live in decency and dignity.

What this means is told by Mrs. Alfred J. Walsky of Thomas J. Walsh Homes, 1961 McCarter Highway.

Mrs. Walsky, formerly Mae Catano, was born July 4, 1920. She grew up in the East Avenue slum section and went to New Street School. When she was 20 she met her husband, then working for Drake's bakery, soon to begin five years in the infantry, now honorably discharged and a salesman. They were married on June 1, 1941, but it was not until November 1945 that they were reunited and ready to begin married life.

## Red Carpet Mislaid

Newark did not roll out the red carpet for the young veteran and his wife. Several landlords offered unheated apartments at unsentimental prices. The Walskys finally had to do as thousands of others. They moved in with Mrs. Walsky's father, who

lao a 4-room cold water flat at 417 F Street in Avenue. There they stayed for eight unhappy years while they had their three children, Donald, 9, Jeffrey, 8, and Barry, 5.

"It was a nightmare," Mrs. Walsky says. "Every day we carried kerosene up from

the basement. We got sick of the smell from the oil stove. There was no wash basin in the bathroom, only a tub and toilet. The two older boys slept in my father's room and Barry shared our bedroom. The place was falling apart. My husband bought paint and did our bedroom over. Two weeks later the ceiling fell on Barry and me.

## The Landlord Cooperates

"Living like that, you can't have a good marriage. Everything gets on your nerves. The children are unhappy. Frankly, I was about ready to blow my top. Then a girl friend asked me why didn't I apply for an apartment in one of the projects. I went down to 222 Market Street and filled out an application. The day the Housing Authority investigator came to check up on our living conditions, the children came upstairs crying because the landlord had chased them out of the backyard again. I guess that helped us get an OK.

"We moved in here on July 20, 1953, and things began to change right away. Here we have a living room, three bedrooms, a kitchen and a bath—all clean and modern. The children have made new friends and



*The Walskys find it more convenient to use the kitchen window than the telephone.*



*Ladies' hour in the Walsky kitchen, with Mrs. Peter Lombardi, Mrs. Walsky and Mrs. William Moore.*

play wherever they like. They sleep better. Donald used to hate school, but see what he brought home today."

Mrs. Walsky held out a note from Donald's Burnet Street School teacher, Mrs. H. Wallace. The note read:

Dear Mrs. Walsky: As a result of his work during the past cycle, your son Donald has been designated as a Burnet Honor Citizen. This honor came to him because of his conscious effort to develop his personality, and a scholastic achievement commensurate with his ability.

"Being here is a good thing for my husband and me," Mrs. Walsky continued. "It has changed our lives for the better. I was down to 113 pounds in that slum. I've gained 14 pounds. And these five rooms cost us only \$39 a month with gas and electricity, which is just about the same as in that cold water flat."

A neighbor walked in. He was Pete Lombardi, a painter and the first president of the newly formed tenants' association at Walsh Homes.

"You can't beat these places," he remarked. "We used to live in a 4-room cold water flat on Eighth Avenue—\$47 a month, plus gas and electricity. Our five rooms here cost us \$50, including gas, electricity and heat.

"Some people say public housing is socialistic. I'd like to know what they'd say if



*Children's hour in the parlor, with Jeffrey, Donald and Barry Walsky.*



they had to live where we did. If these projects charged a standard rent, we'd have to pay \$100 a month. Then we'd all go back to the cold water flats."

"Keeping this place clean is nothing compared to the work I did in the other house," Mrs. Walsky resumed. "You don't feel ashamed to have anybody see where you live. And the friends I have made—I can't count them."

*At top is Mrs. Lombardi with Marlene and Ronald. Below, left, Jeffrey Walsky and a fellow academician appraise each other's drawings at the Burnet Street School. Directly below, prettily covered with paper masonry, is the cold water flat on Seventeenth Street where the Walskys used to live.*



# LOW-RENT HOUSING PROJECTS IN NEWARK

	No. of apartments	No. of acres	Construction cost	Total cost	Year completed
Seth Boyden Court.....	530	15	\$ 1,853,293	\$ 2,737,655	1941
Pennington Court .....	236	4.6	840,073	1,275,009	1940
James M. Baxter Terrace.....	613	12.1	2,200,031	3,773,739	1941
Stephen Crane Village.....	354	14.5	1,144,310	1,828,246	1941
John W. Hyatt Court.....	402	9.8	1,413,042	2,211,805	1942
Felix Fuld Court.....	300	6.7	1,094,231	1,873,546	1942
Franklin D. Roosevelt Homes.....	275	12.5	1,101,649	1,749,000	1946
Joseph P. Bradley Court.....	301	9.7	1,234,587	1,500,000	1942
Otto E. Kretchmer Homes.....	730	14.9	8,499,770	9,999,698	1953
Archbishop Thomas J. Walsh Homes.....	630	16.5	7,028,795	8,425,474	1953
Rev. William P. Hayes Homes.....	1,458	18.8	14,328,831	18,457,447	1954
Christopher Columbus Homes.....	1,556	14.5	16,052,803	20,738,952	1956
TOTALS .....	7,385	149.6	\$56,791,415	\$74,570,571	

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## THE CITY OF NEWARK

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